

*Q.* Mr. President, what can you do about the Iraqi dumping of oil in the Gulf? Is there any way you can offset it?

*The President.* Well, there's a lot of activity going on right now trying to figure out what the best course of action is to clean this mess up, to stop this spill.

Saddam Hussein continues to amaze the world. First he uses these Scud missiles that have no military value whatsoever. Then he uses the lives of prisoners of war, parading them and threatening to use them as shields; obviously, they have been brutalized. And now he resorts to enormous environmental damage in terms of turning loose a lot of oil. No military advantage to him whatsoever in this. It's not going to help him at all—

*Q.* It won't stop an invasion?

*The President.* Absolutely not. It has nothing to do with that. And so, I don't know. I mean, he clearly is outraging the world. But back to your question, there were some meetings that were concluded about 2 hours ago. A course of action that I will not comment—I think is close to agreement. I'm not going to comment on what it is, but I can assure you that every effort will be made to try to stop this continuing spill into the Gulf and also to stop what has been done from moving further south. It's a little hard to do when the man has taken over this other country, Kuwait, and is using their assets in this way. But we will try hard, and you can be rest assured that the scientists and the oil people, the military are all involved—the Saudis and the Kuwaitis and the U.S. side—all involved in the closest consultation.

*Q.* Are you speaking of a retaliation?

*The President.* No, I'm speaking of what we do about this spill right now. We'll get to that later.

*Q.* Mr. President, you said the other night that no one should cry for Saddam Hussein when he's brought to justice. Do you envision war crime trials for Saddam? And also, can you say categorically that when this is all over Saddam will not be allowed to remain in power?

*The President.* No, I'm staying with our objectives. And the violation of the Geneva conventions are clear, and we'll have to see how that works out. We'll have to see what

a post-liberation Kuwait looks like there in Iraq. But our objectives remain the same, Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

*Q.* As you pointed out, Saddam has done a number of things, none of them really a military offensive. Are you coming to the conclusion that he's not going to fight?

*The President.* No, I haven't reached that conclusion at all, because these Scud missile attacks certainly invite instant retaliation if you can find the mobile launchers. And we're keeping on in that quest, as I indicated the other day.

*Q.* Well, what's he doing?

*The President.* I think what he's trying to do is to rally support in some of the countries where he may have some. I think he's trying with the attacks on Israel to divide the coalition and to mount anti-Israel sentiment in parts of the world.

What he is doing with—when you dump oil reserves out, unless he's trying to show how tough he will be for Saudi Arabia or something like that, I can't figure out. What he's doing when he brutally parades American prisoners, I can't figure that out either—or British prisoners, or an Italian airman. But it is not a performance that is winning him any points anywhere in my view.

*Q.* Mr. President, a lot of Americans would like to know—since all these problems seem to get back, at least in your statements, to Saddam Hussein—why you don't target him. Is it because of the embarrassment you encountered in trying to bring Manuel Noriega to ground?

*The President.* Hey, there's no embarrassment in that. It took 6 or 7 days, but there wasn't any embarrassment. I felt no embarrassment at all. There was a man who was wanted for crimes in this country, and he's in prison, and he's going to have his day in court. So, I would like to argue with the predicate a little bit because there wasn't any embarrassment. But we've set our objectives. Our coalition partners are in accord with these objectives, and we will stay with these objectives.

*Q.* But why not go after Saddam Hussein?

*The President.* Because we've set our objectives. We've got our objectives in accord with the coalition, and we'll stay with